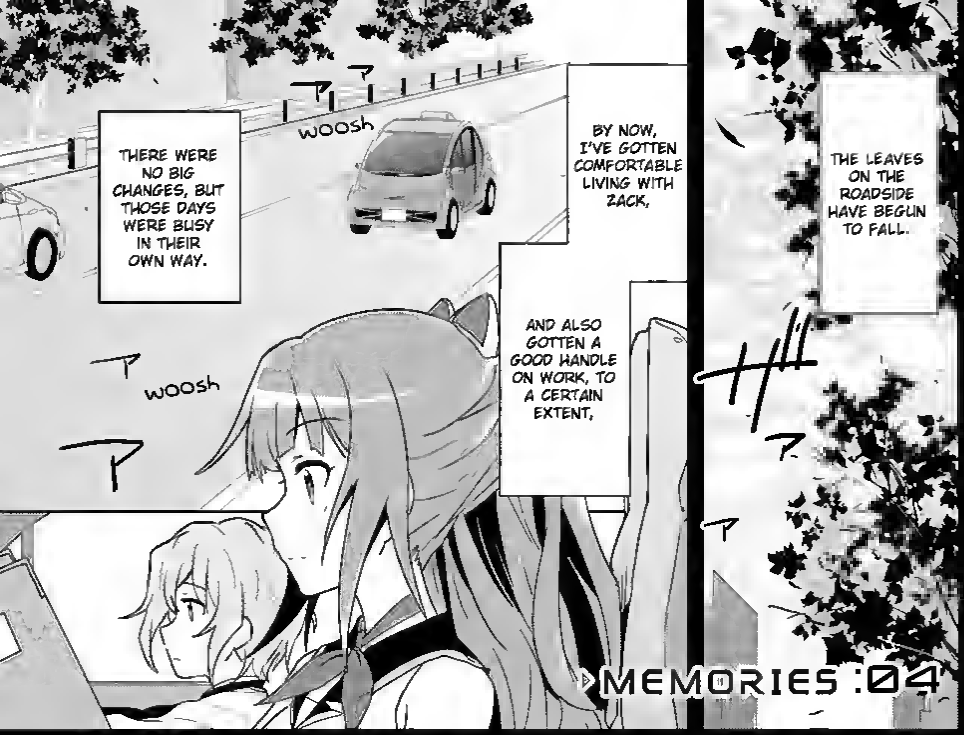

THE LEAVES ON THE ROADSIDE HAVE BEGUN TO FALL.
BY NOW, I'VE GOTTEN COMFORTABLE LIVING WITH ZACK,
AND ALSO GOTTEN A GOOD HANDLE ON WORK, TO A CERTAIN EXTENT,
THERE WERE NO BIG CHANGES, BUT THOSE DAYS WERE BUSY IN THEIR OWN WAY.
woosh
woosh
MEMORIES :04

THEY ALLOWED US TO BUILD UP EXPERIENCE,
AND NOW, WE'RE ABLE TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM-ATIC CASES AND ESCAPE ATTEMPTS.
WITHOUT PANICKING.

HOW-EVER,
THAT ALONE DIDN'T MEAN WE COULD EASILY HANDLE ANYTHING THEY COULD THROW AT US.
THAT'S THE HARD PART OF THIS JOB.
TO SAY NO-THING OF
HOW MUCH HARDER FOLLOWING TERMINAL ONE'S POLICY MAKES ALL OF THAT
FOR EXA-MPLE-
roll

CASES LIKE THIS ONE.
EXCUSE US!
DING DONG

—THE NEXT DAY
PLEASE, SECTION CHIEF!
AH— BUT, MICHIRU -CHAN,
YOU ALREADY GOT THEM TO SIGN THE FORM, RIGHT?
SO, THAT'S NOT IN YOUR JURISDICTION ANYMORE...
IT WOULD BLOW OUR BUDGET, TOO... YOU SEE?
PLEASE, THERE MUST BE SOME-THING..
WHAT'S GOING ON?
AH, KAZUKI -SAN.
I WAS TALKING TO THE CHIEF ABOUT A RETRIEVAL ...
A-AHAHA, THIS DISCUSSION IS ALREADY OVER, SO,
THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT, KAZUKI -KUN..
...HMM?
ALRIGHT, MICHIRU, LET'S TALK.
RIGHT.
UM.. IT'S ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AFTER WE GOT THE CONSENT FORM SIGNED YESTERDAY-
AHA-

SO, ABOUT WHAT I WAS SAYIN' BEFORE...
AOI 'AS A REALLY CUTE SIDE TO 'ER.
YES, THAT'S FINE.
THANK YOU.
HOW'S 'AT?
LIKE ON MY BIRTHDAY, WHEN SHE-
aok
blow
WHY, YOU-
I TOLD YOU TO STOP THAT TALK!
LEAVE MY HAIR ALONE!
YOU'RE ALWAYS MAKING PEOPLE UNCOMFORTABLE ... SORRY ABOUT THAT, MICHIRU -SAN.
No, it's okay
NOT AT ALL, I ENJOYED YOUR STORIES ..
hide
hide
SORRY 'BOUT THAT.
I JUST CAN'T HELP BUT TALK 'BOUT OLD TIMES, WITH THE END APPROACH-ING LIKE THIS...
コト clink
AHH—

BUT MAN, YA'LL MUST 'AVE IT ROUGH
A JOB WHERE YOU 'AVE TO GO 'ROUND LIKE THIS AND TELL PEOPLE THEIR TIME IS OVER
IT'S A DOOZY, RIGHT?
AHAHA... WELL I CHOSE THE JOB MYSELF.
BUT, THANK YOU FOR THE CONCERN.
IT FEELS WEIRD TO HAVE THE OWNER WORRY ABOUT US
GIVEN THAT IT MUST BE HARD ENOUGH JUST COPING WITH YOUR OWN FEELINGS...
YOU'RE A KIND PERSON.
HEHE RIGHT?
THAT SIDE OF HIS HAS SAVED A LOT OF PEOPLE.
... I HATE DEPRESSING ATMOSPHERES.
SO I WANT TO SPEND AS MUCH OF THIS TIME WITH A SMILE ON MY FACE AS I CAN.
MM, BUT STILL...
HM?
DID YOU *WANT* TO SEE ME CRYIN?
OF COURSE NOT.

WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU LOOKIN' AT?
HAHA...
IT'S JUST THAT THERE'S MORE TO YOU THAN THE FACT THAT YOU'RE ALWAYS CHEERFUL.
lean in
?
MICHIRU-CHAN.
HAH. I DON'T KNOW HOW TO REACT TO THAT EXCHANGE
HEY!
WHAT'RE YOU TWO WHIPSERING 'BOUT?
SO, AGAIN... SINCE IT'S SO THIN...
whisper
whisper
What's with the right hand?
ACTUALLY,
HE'S ALREADY FORCING HIMSELF PRETTY HARD TO KEEP UP THAT ATTITUDE.
...EVER SINCE HE REALIZED THAT MY LIFESPAN IS ALMOST UP.
I WAS JUST TELLING HER I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
MM,

I TOLD YA I'D MANAGE SOMEHOW, DIDN'T I?
MAN, YOU'RE SUCH A WORRY-WART.
ha ha ha
I'LL BE JUST FINE.
YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR-SELF AFTER I'M GONE...
ALL YOU EVER DO IS WORK, SO I'M WORRIED ABOUT HOW
YER BEING REALLY NOSY TODAY, AREN'T CHA.
WOAH.
SO ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO BE FINE?
HUH?
I BET IT'D BE LESS THAN A WEEK BEFORE YOU GOT INTO A PRETTY SORRY STATE.
COOKING, CLEANING, GROOMING THAT HAIR OF YOURS.
HMM?
USE THE SERVICE THESE TWO EXPLAINED EARLIER?
SO, WHY DON'T YOU JUST
SEE, I KNEW YOU HAD NO PLAN.
flinch
IN MY STEAD.
I'D BE HAPPY IF YOU GOT A NEW ONE TO TAKE CARE OF YOU
MM ..I CAN'T SAY I'M OKAY WITH THAT ONE, BUT,
...SURELY YOU DON'T MEAN THE ONE WHERE I CAN GET A NEW OS INSTALLED IN YOUR BODY?
THE ONE WHERE YOU CAN GET 30% OFF ON A NEW UNIT?

ignore
I'LL MANAGE SOMEHOW.
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE I LOVE SO
THERE'S NO WAY I COULD REPLACE YOU
... YOU AND YER SILLY IDEAS.
I'M NOT ENTERTAINING THAT THOUGHT. EVEN AS A JOKE!
NOT LISTENING!
WHEN I SAY 'REPLACEMENT'...
BUT, YOU KNOW,
Jean
HEHE.
I'M HAPPY THAT YOU'D SAY THAT.
I CAN'T HEAR YAAA!
I'M NOT LISTENIN'!
I MEANT AS IN-
AAAHHH!
WAIT.
YOU'RE GETTING THIS WRONG-
Hmph
I TALKED TO AOI-SAN ABOUT IT WHEN WE LEFT...
THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED
.. SO,

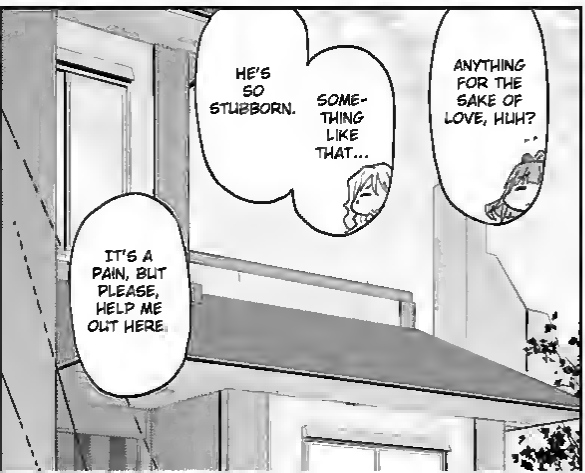
I WANT TO MAKE HAMASUGE-SAN LISTEN PROPERLY,
AND I THOUGHT ABOUT CONVINCING HIM TOGETHER...
SO...
..I SEE.
YEAH, IT MIGHT REALLY BE OUT OF YOUR JURIS-DICTION, BUT...
AFTER-CARE IS IMPORT-ANT TOO,
SO, WHY NOT?
WA-WAIT, KAZUKI -KUN?!
CHIEF, SURELY YOU
WEREN'T THINKING THAT
THE RETRIEVAL TARGET'S FEELINGS ARE OF NO CONCERN TO US, AS LONG AS
WE GET THE FORM SIGNED ...
grin
YOU WEREN'T, RIGHT?
T-THANK YOU!
SURE.
JUST MAKE SURE IT DOESN'T AFFECT YOUR USUAL WORK.
GOT IT!
UM... JUST DON'T OVERDO IT... OKAY?
A... HAHA ...

Squeeze
Squeeze
!!
SO? WHATCHA GONNA DO ABOUT THAT, HM?
I SEE.
HMM.
Pat
Seriously, when is he gonna let that go..
Squeeze
OW OW OW OW OW
I DON'T THINK MAKING HIM LISTEN TO YOU IS GONNA BE EASY.
...HE WON'T EVEN LISTEN TO HIS LOVER, RIGHT?
SO, ANY GOOD IDEAS?
I WILL IF YOU PROVE TO ME THAT YOU'RE NOT A ROOKIE ANYMORE.
FIRST, COULD YOU STOP CALLING ME THAT?
SO, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, ROOKIE-CHAN?
WELL, GOOD LUCK.
Y-YOU CAN'T KNOW THAT WITHOUT TRYING!
...FAT CHANCE OF THAT WORKING
... WELL,
FOR THE TIME BEING, I WAS JUST GOING TO TRY TALKING TO HIM NORMALLY...

...
...

AH, YOU'RE GOIN' HOME!
IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE HE'S GOING TO LISTEN...
SORRY, EVEN THOUGH YOU CAME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE.

THERE'S NO WAY TO RESOLVE THE MISUNDER-STANDING WHEN HE'S LIKE THAT, IS THERE...
NO DICE,
HE'S ASSUMED THAT I MEANT A ROMANTIC REPLACEMENT, AND NOW HE'S DUG IN.


IT'S A PAIN, BUT PLEASE, HELP ME OUT HERE.
HE'S SO STUBBORN.
SOME-THING LIKE THAT...
ANYTHING FOR THE SAKE OF LOVE, HUH?

EVEN THOUGH YOU WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT GETTING A GIFTIA TO TAKE CARE OF HIM.

A REAL PAIN, ISN'T HE?
HE'S

WHAT SHOULD WE DO...
HMM...
SH-SHUT UP!
WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED!
YASUTAKA WAS RIGHT, HUH.
IF THE EARS ARE A NO-GO, THEN HIS EYES ...LETTERS?
...HIS EARS BEING PLUGGED UP IS A PROBLEM.
Rustle
Grip
Grip
Lover X
ssistant ✓
misunderstanding!

Pff
cough
click
click

Pull
?
glance
swoosh
swoosh
swoosh
Quick
turn
haa
haa

BUT WE ENDED UP BASICALLY JUST GOING OVER THERE TO PLAY GAMES. .
MY TRAIN OF THOUGHT WAS "IF THE EARS ARE A NO-GO, THEN ..",
SIGH
FWOOSH
ALL WE REALLY HAVE TO DO IS RESOLVE THE MISUNDERSTAND-ING, AFTER ALL.
I THOUGHT IT HAD A CHANCE AT WORKING.
IT WAS A BIT OF A SILLY METHOD, BUT,
LET'S JUST TRY TO THINK OF MORE APPROACHES.
... ANY-HOW,
FWOOSH
IF WE KEEP TRYING, SOONER OR LATER–
WELL, IT WAS AOI'S PLAN.
PLUS...
IT SOUNDED LIKE IT'D BE FUN.
WELL, YEAH.
TRYING TO GET MESSAGE ACROSS BY FINGER-WRITING IT ON HIS BODY WAS A BIT MUCH THOUGH.
WELL,
IF YOU REALIZED THAT, WHY DIDN'T YOU STOP HER?!

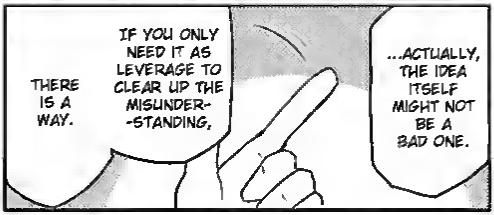
SEVERAL DAYS LATER
UGHH...
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE ABOUT TO FALL ASLEEP. FIGHTING AN UPHILL BATTLE, HUH?
...YEAH, YOU COULD SAY THAT.
HE'S SO STUBBORN...
WELL, GOOD LUCK.
IT WAS EASY TO GET PERMISSION FOR THE ACTUAL RETRIEVAL, AT LEAST...
THAT MAY BE SO, BUT..
I DON'T WANT THEM TO HAVE ANY REGRETS...
SO...
WHAT SHOULD I DO...
WHAT SHOUL...
.....
OI.
AH.
menacing
SOME NERVE YOU HAVE, DOZING OFF IN THE OFFICE.
FUWAAA ?!
I-I'M SORRY!
I'LL BE CARE--FUL!
slam
clatter
HM? OH,
YOU'RE ALREADY DONE FOR THE DAY, HUH.

nod
nod
GOOD JOB ...IS WHAT I'D LIKE TO SAY, BUT-
...I SEE YOU'RE STILL CARRYING ON DESPITE YOUR REGULAR WORK.
GOOD GRIEF.
IT'S BECAUSE YOU HAVE NO WILLPOWER THAT YOU'RE HAVING PROBLEMS.
OW.
smack
...HEY, PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER.
paf
IF YOU'RE DOING IT VOLUNTARILY, YOU GOTTA HAVE MORE ENTHUSIASM. YOU'RE NOT GONNA GET ANYWHERE IN THAT STATE.
.....
YOU'RE COMING WITH ME.
clatter
GET UP.
SEE YOU GUYS LATER~
OH, WOULD YOU LOOK AT THE TIME!
HM?
I DON'T THINK WILLPOWER HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT THOUGH~
AH,
RIGHT, MICHIRU..
?
I'LL BEAT YOU INTO SHAPE SO THAT YOU DON'T GET WORN OUT BY SOMETHING SIMPLE AS THIS.

REMEMBER THAT AND YOU'LL BE FINE
IF THE PERSON WON'T LOWER THEIR GUARD, SURPRISE ATTACKS WORK WELL.
ISN'T THAT JUST HOW YOU PICK UP GIRLS...
ANYONE GETS DOWN WHEN THEY'RE TIRED, AND THEN MAKE MISTAKES.
NO MATTER, WHAT YOU'RE DOING, STAMINA IS IMPORTANT.
WH-WHY...
pant
AM I...
RUNNING?
wheeze
step
SAI CORP. COMPANY GYM
pant
HUH?!
BE PREPARED TO DO THIS EVERY DAY, FROM NOW ON.
WHEN YOU'VE EXHAUSTED YOUR STAMINA, YOU HAVE TO RELY ON YOUR WILLPOWER AND YOUR FIGHTING SPIRIT.
SO, WE'RE TRAINING THOSE TOO.
THERE'S A POINT IN DOING THIS WHEN YOU HAVE IT ROUGH.
NOW'S THE PERFECT TIME.
SURE, BUT...
WHY... NOW...

pant
wheeze
AH...
I'M FINALLY... FINISHED...
pant
wheeze
pant
.....
pant
I CAN'T DO ANYTHING IF I CAN'T GET HIM TO LOWER HIS GUARD...
I'VE TRIED A BUNCH OF METHODS, AND I CAN'T THINK OF ANY MORE...
HAMASUGE SAN'S MISUNDER-STANDING...
WHAT SHOULD I DO ABOUT
WHAT IS?
...NO GOOD, HUH
"IF THE PERSON WON'T LOWER THEIR GUARD, SURPRISE ATTACKS WORK WELL-"
!
...SURPRISE ATTACKS?
...HM, IT'D DEFINITELY CLEAR UP THE MISUNDER-STANDING IF YOU SHOWED UP WITH A MALE MODEL OR SOMETHING...
HE'D PROBABLY GET THE MESSAGE... I THINK.
IF I COULD GET A GIFTIA THAT COULDN'T BE HIS LOVER NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT,
HOW I SHOULD APPROACH HAMASUGE-SAN...
AH, THANKS
HERE

BUT, SINCE GIFTIA ARE CUSTOM-MADE,
THAT'S NOT REALLY SOMETHING I CAN DO...
AFTER ALL, YOU'D NEED HAMASUGE-SAN'S CONSENT, SINCE HE'D BE THE ONE MAKING THE PURCHASE...
SO THAT'S HOW IT IS, HUH.


IF YOU ONLY NEED IT AS LEVERAGE TO CLEAR UP THE MISUNDER--STANDING,
THERE IS A WAY.
...ACTUALLY, THE IDEA ITSELF MIGHT NOT BE A BAD ONE.

.....
YEAH...

FOR A SECOND I THOUGHT IT MIGHT WORK, BUT..

?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

SAI CORP ALSO
HAS AN EQUIVALENT TO THAT.
HUH?

NOW, THIS ISN'T IN OUR JURISDICTION, BUT...

THEY LET YOU TEST DRIVE CARS BEFORE YOU BUY THEM, RIGHT?
SINCE THEY'RE BIG-TICKET ITEMS THAT PEOPLE WON'T BUY WITHOUT TRYING THEM FIRST.

...SO THAT'S HOW THE RENTAL SERVICE WORKS.
WITH THIS, I THINK IT'LL JUST TAKE ONE LOOK TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEM ...
THIS! THIS IS IT!
UM...?
UM...
mutter
mutter
YEAH, IF WE DO THIS...
AOI -SAN,
IF EVERYTHING LOOKS OKAY, CAN WE ARRANGE THINGS, THEN?
AH, WAIT.
I'D LIKE TO CHOOSE IT.
IS THAT OKAY?
THIS RENTAL GIFTIA.
HEHE.
OF COURSE IT IS, BUT,
YOU WANT TO DO THAT, EVEN THOUGH IT'LL GET RETURNED AS SOON AS THE PROBLEM IS RESOLVED?
...I'M SURE THAT'S NOT WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN.
PAK

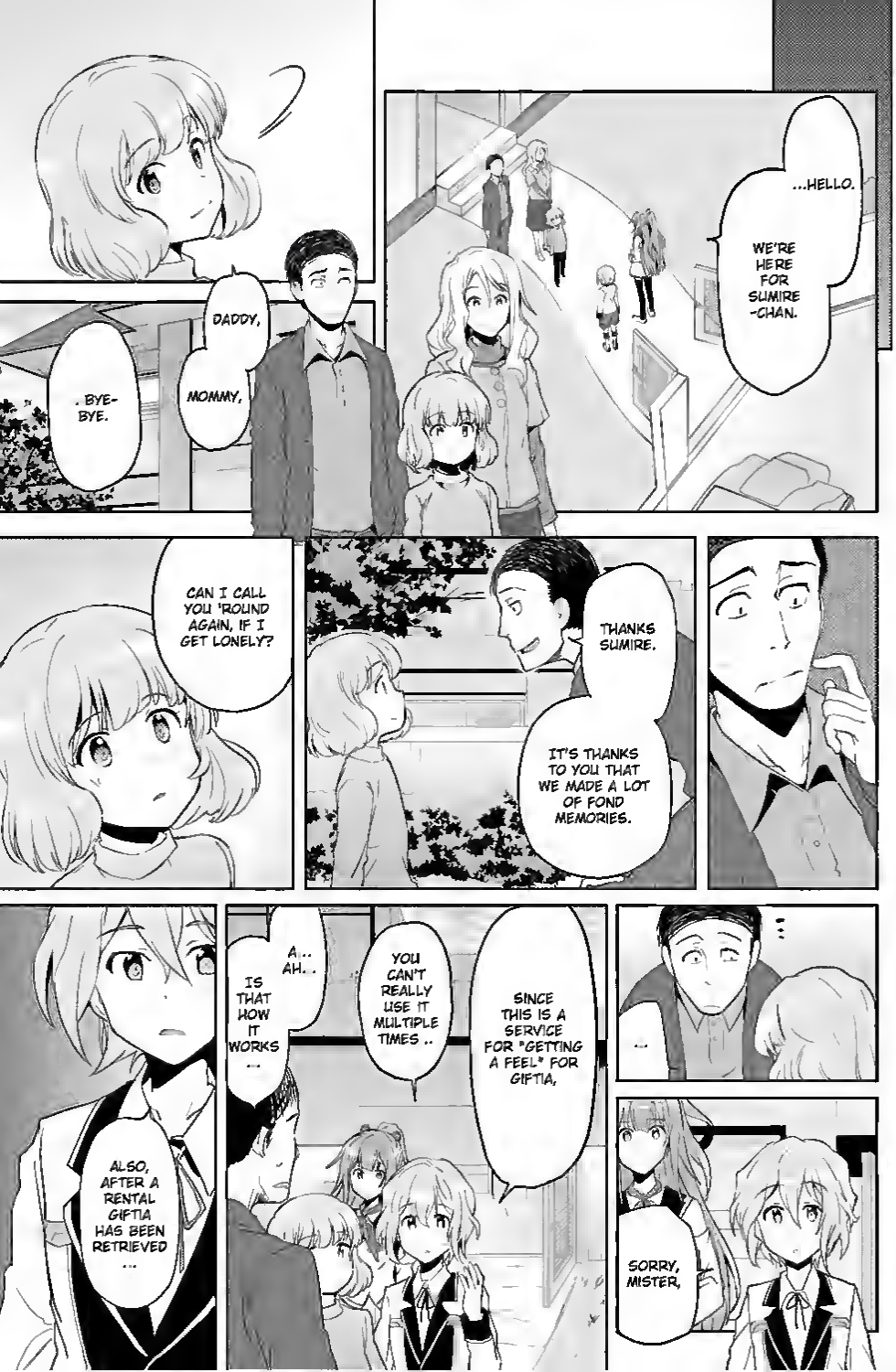
BAM
浜雪 アカヤ
WHAT IN TARNATION IS THIS?!
WH-
NO, THAT'S NOT IT.
HIGH PRESSURE SALES-MANSHIP?!
THEN, HOW...
HOW WOULD I DO THAT WITHOUT YOUR PERMISSION?
THEN WHY DID YOU BUY IT?!
...NO.
DOES SHE LOOK LIKE A REPLACEMENT LOVER TO YOU?
YUP, A LITTLE GIRL.
Smile
I CAN'T LOVE NOBODY OTHER THAN AOI-
BESIDES, NO MATTER WHAT YOU BRING ME,
hehe
FINALLY, WE GOT THROUGH TO YOU.
...? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
A KID?
WAIT,
?

...HUH?
HOW ABOUT WE SPEND THE REST OF THE DAY WITH HER?
NOW THAT THAT'S SETTLED,
—OH,
SO I WAS MISUNDER-STANDING ALL THIS TIME...
IT'S TOO LATE NOW TO CONVINCE ME THAT I NEED ONE, OR SOMETHING...
I CAN'T ACCEPT ANY GIFTIA THAT AIN'T YOU.
EVEN LIKE THIS,
I DON'T REALLY MIND, BUT IT'S NO USE.
BUT AT LEAST THIS ONCE, I WANT TO EXPERIENCE WHAT A FAMILY WITH YOU WOULD BE LIKE.
I'VE FELT MORE THAN ENOUGH ROMANCE FOR ONE LIFETIME,
I WANT TO EXPERIENCE IT AT LEAST ONCE.
TRUE... BUT STILL, PLEASE.
...THEN, IF YOU COULD JUST SIGN THE RENTAL FORM—
...FINE, BUT JUST FOR TODAY.
. NO GOOD?

—...
squeeze
I LIKE SUMIRE
AH—
AHH, WE'RE GIVING HER A NAME?
WHAT SHOULD WE NAME HER?
swoosh
NICE TO MEETCHA.
YOUR NAME IS SUMIRE.
THIS TIME TOMORROW
...THEN, WE'LL BE BACK FOR SUMIRE-CHAN

AFTER THAT,
I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY HOW
THEY SPENT THEIR TIME,
BUT,
bash!
I'M SURE
IT WAS FILLED WITH WARMTH.
wash
wash
BE-CAUSE—
urk
stare

...MICHIRU—
ARE YOU OKAY...?
I'm not...
WHEN WE CAME BACK,
WHAT I SAW CONVINCED ME OF THAT.
...BUT,
I ENDED UP THINKING ABOUT SOME STUFF.
fwoosh
KAZUKI-SAN IS SO MERCILESS..
YOU'VE BEEN GETTING WORKED HARD EVERY DAY AFTER WORK, HUH?
SO,
I WAS HAPPY TO SEE A MEETING FOR ONCE.
THIS IS OBVIOUS, SINCE WE'RE ON RETRIEVAL DUTY, BUT,
NORMALLY, ALL WE SEE IS PARTINGS, RIGHT?
HMM...
I ENDED UP THINKING ABOUT THAT,
SO, YOU KNOW...
Stop
IN THE END, THEY'LL BE SAYING GOODBYE TO HER VERY SOON.
...BUT,
SINCE SHE'S A RENTAL, EVEN IF THEY WELCOME HER WITH SUCH WARMTH,


...HELLO.
WE'RE HERE FOR SUMIRE-CHAN.
DADDY,
MOMMY,
. BYE-BYE.
CAN I CALL YOU 'ROUND AGAIN, IF I GET LONELY?
THANKS SUMIRE.
IT'S THANKS TO YOU THAT WE MADE A LOT OF FOND MEMORIES.
...
SINCE THIS IS A SERVICE FOR "GETTING A FEEL" FOR GIFTIA,
YOU CAN'T REALLY USE IT MULTIPLE TIMES ..
A.. AH..
IS THAT HOW IT WORKS ...
ALSO, AFTER A RENTAL GIFTIA HAS BEEN RETRIEVED ...
SORRY, MISTER.

EACH TIME,
THEIR MEMORIES ARE FORMATTED.
SUMI-RE'S BEEN ...
NOT JUST NOW, BUT ALREADY...?
... YES.
AFTER HER MEMORIES ARE RESET, SHE'LL BE PUT INTO HIBERNATION UNTIL SHE'S NEEDED AGAIN.
HUH?
WAIT, WAIT...
I DON'T GET IT,
WHAT 'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT?
IT WAS RIGHT THERE IN THE CONTRACT, WASN'T IT?
IF YOU SIGN SOMETHING WITHOUT READING IT PROPERLY...
BUT FORMAT-TING, I MEAN...
WITH A GIFTIA, THERE WILL ALWAYS BE A PARTING,
YOU KNEW THAT, DIDN'T YOU?
DADDY, LISTEN!
THIS SERVICE IS PRIMARILY FOR NEW CUST-OMERS,
SO,
FOR PEOPLE WONDERING ABOUT WHETHER THEY SHOULD GET A GIFTIA,
IT LETS THEM EXPERIENCE WHAT THE PARTING FEELS LIKE,
SO THEY CAN APPRECIATE EVERYONE AROUND THEM. .

DADDY,
...I HAD FUN.
THIS MUST BE WHAT HAPPINESS FEELS LIKE.
SO, SO EVERYONE CAN FEEL THE SAME WAY,
UM...
Y- YA DUMMY ...
I DON'T CARE ABOUT THAT...
THAT AIN'T
WHAT HAPPINESS IS...
... DADDY ?
IT'S YOU!
YOU WOULD BE MISSING!
I CAN'T ...
I DON'T WANT THAT...
Pull

SEE?
I REALLY AM HAPPY.
THANK YOU,
DADDY.
……ッ
I CAN'T DO THIS!
THERE'S NO WAY I CAN AGREE TO THIS, YOU MORONS!
UP 'TIL NOW,
AND FROM NOW ON, TOO?!
HOW THE 'ELL AM I SUPPOSED TO LET HER KEEP REPEATING THAT?!
huh
huh
huh
…SUMIRE,
YOU'RE OUR CHILD.
turn
I'M GONNA GO NEGO--TIATE.
pat
WAIT 'ERE.
step

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BOTHER, IT'S POINTLESS.
YOU WAIT A SECOND.
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SIGN THEM.
surprise
NO, NO, WAIT.
IT'S POINTLESS BECAUSE I HAVE THE PURCHASE DOCUMENTS RIGHT HERE
LIKE 'ELL IT IS,
DON'T TRY TO STOP ME!
I'VE DECIDED THAT SHE'S OUR CHILD.
...
I'VE
BEEN HAD, HAVEN'T I?
?
.....
.....
..WAIT JUST A SECOND.
WHY THE 'ELL DID YOU ALREADY HAVE THOSE?
AIN'T THAT ODD?

THAT'S WHEN IT HIT ME.
WHEN MICHIRU SUGGESTED THAT I GET A RENTAL TO CLEAR UP THE MISUNDER-STANDING,
SORRY.
YOU HAD ME WRAPPED AROUND YOUR LITTLE FINGER.
...SO, BASIC-ALLY,
THAT WHEN YOU HEARD ABOUT THE FORMATTING, YOU'D DEFINITELY REACT LIKE THIS.
AND, EVEN IF WE RESOLVED THAT,
I'D HAVE TO CONVINCE YOU
TO GET A GIFT IA TO TAKE CARE OF YOU.
SO, I FIGURED THIS WAS MY ONLY OPTION.
...IT'S FRUST-RATING, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D LIVE TO SEE THE TWO OF US GETTIN' CALLED 'MOMMY' AND 'DADDY'
AND WE EVEN GOT A CUTE DAUGHTER...
...THE LORD WOULD SMITE ME WHERE I STAND IF I DARED COMPLAIN 'BOUT THIS.
...AND I CAN STOP WORRYING ABOUT YOU, TOO, NOW THAT YOU HAVE SUMIRE.
Right?
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE HELP.
THIS IS ALL THANKS TO YOU TWO.
REALLY, THANKS.

I'M HAPPY TO HEAR THAT.
HUH...
—SO, THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED.
AHAHA .. THANK YOU ..
ALL THE WORK WAS WORTH IT IN THE END, WASN'T IT?
TAP
NEGOTIATING WITH DEPARTMENTS OUT OF YOUR OWN JURISDICTION—
ASKING FOR ADVICE,
GOING OVER THERE COUNTLESS TIMES TO TRY AND CLEAR THINGS UP,
clatter
YEAH.
...AH, YOU LOOKED UP HER NAME?
...?
'SUMIRE' IS THE JAPANESE WORD FOR THE VIOLET FLOWER.
...I SEE
...
TO THAT WISH OF HERS.
SUMIRE WAS THE PERFECT ANSWER
SHE GAVE HER NAME THAT MAKES IT CLEAR THAT SHE'S THEIR CHILD.
AND, SO THAT THEIR FEELINGS WOULD CONNECT,
菫 Violet
AFTER SHE DECIDED SHE WAS GOING TO HAVE A DAUGHTER,
AOI-SAN SPENT ALL OF HER TIME THINKING UP A NAME...

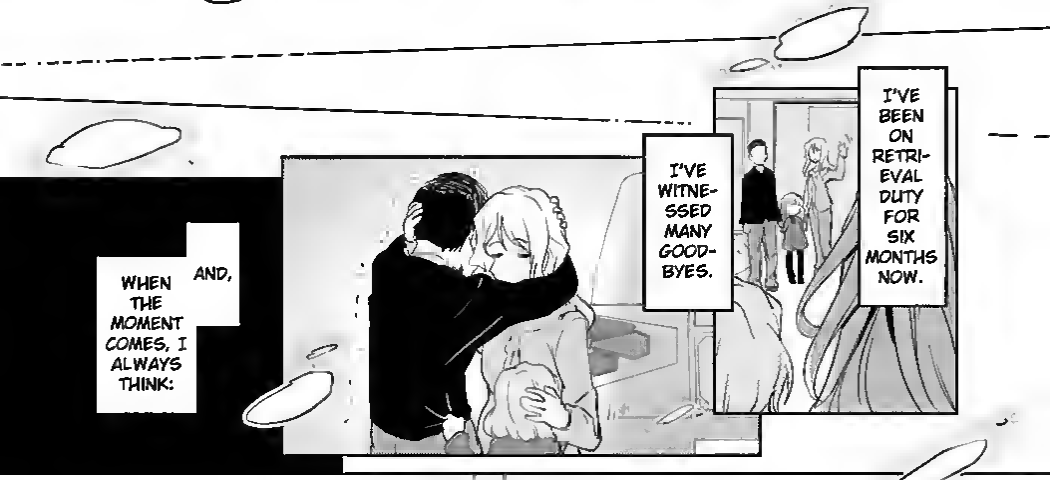
TL NOTE: AKAYA (RED) + AOI (BLUE) = SUMIRE (VIOLET)

SINCE SHE WAS CONVINCED THAT HER PLAN WOULD WORK,
"HE'S DEFINITELY GOING TO TAKE HER IN AS HIS DAUGHTER", SHE SAID.
ACTUALLY, MOST OF THE PLANNING WE SPENT WITH AOI-SAN
ENDED UP BEING TO THINK OF A NAME.
...AND,
IT'S THE SAME AS WHAT HAPPENED WITH INUGAYA-SAN.
WHEN I HEARD THAT, I THOUGHT
YEAH.
THE THING ABOUT HOW THE PERSON WHO'S SPENT YEARS TOGETHER WITH THEM KNOWS BETTER THAN ANYONE WHAT METHOD IS GOING TO WORK?
THAT?
I THINK I NOW UNDERSTAND A LITTLE BETTER
WHAT YOU TOLD ME BACK THEN.
I DIDN'T STOP AOI-SAN.
EVEN THOUGH I THOUGHT IT WAS A BIT OF AN EXCESSIVE PLAN,
SO,
YOU SETTLED IT IN A WAY WORTHY OF TERMINAL ONE
HONESTLY,
I THOUGHT YOU WERE JUST SPINNING YOUR WHEELS FOR NOTHING, BUT,
clink
...WOW—
COLOR ME IMPRESSED.

...?
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
THEN-
NOW,
IT'S TOO BAD.
... IT WORKED OUT BECAUSE OF THE ADVICE YOU GAVE ME.
THE SOUND OF "ROOKIE-CHAN".
Wave
Wave
I KINDA LIKED
HAPPEN A LOT WITH RENTAL GIFTIA.
I HAVE HEARD THAT THESE SORTS OF CASES
Thanks Isla.
... THOUGH,
Pouring

IS SOMETHING WRONG?
NO... I WAS JUST THINKING
..
SEEMS LIKE THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED HERE, TOO.
AND THAT THEY ACTUALLY GET TREATED BETTER THAN GIFTIA THAT ARE JUST PURCHASED NORMALLY.
.. IS THAT SO?
..ACTUALLY,
THE LONGEST A GIFTIA CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE RENTAL PROGRAM IS JUST UNDER THREE YEARS.
IF A RENTAL GIFTIA
NEVER GOT PURCHASED BY ANYONE,
THEY'D JUST KEEP REPEATING THAT UNTIL THEIR LIFETIME RUNS OUT...
SO,
IF THEY REACH THEIR TIME LIMIT, THEY'RE TRANSFERRED TO A DIFFERENT DEPARTMENT.
YEAH.
THAT WAY, THEY STILL HAVE OVER HALF OF THEIR LIFESPANS LEFT OVER
I SEE...
WE'RE ALL TREATED WELL.
THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE HERE THAT ARE KIND TO GIFTIA.
SOME OF THE GIFTIA THAT WORK AT SAI ARE RENTAL SERVICE ALUMNI.

I GET THAT YOU HAVE A LOT TO THINK ABOUT, BUT,
YOU STILL HAVE AN IMPORTANT JOB TO DO, RIGHT?
WORK HARD UNTIL THE VERY END.
...
RIGHT!


I'VE BEEN ON RETRIEVAL DUTY FOR SIX MONTHS NOW.
I'VE WITNESSED MANY GOODBYES.
AND, WHEN THE MOMENT COMES, I ALWAYS THINK:

OUR JOB IS
RIPPING APART MEMORIES.

LOOK AT THE ATTACH-MENT.
I GOT A MAIL FROM HAMASUGE -SAN.
lean in
WHAT?
ZACK— COME OVER HERE FOR A SECOND.
BUT—
SUMIRE-CHAN IS ACTING LIKE AOI-SAN.
here
THEY REALLY FEEL LIKE A FAMILY... DON'T THEY?
WAS SMILING UP UNTIL THE VERY END.
AOI -SAN
IN THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS, 'VIOLET' MEANS—
I'M SURE THAT'S BE-CAUSE SHE HAD ENTRUSTED HER FEELINGS...
"A SMALL HAPPI-NESS."
BUT, THAT'S EXACT-LY WHY
A JOB WHERE WE CAN HELP PEOPLE HAVE A GOODBYE WITH NO REGRETS IS PERFECT FOR ME.
AL-RIGHT! LET'S WORK HARD TOMORROW, TOO!
Why all of a sudden?
CONTINUED IN VOLUME 2

-謝辞-

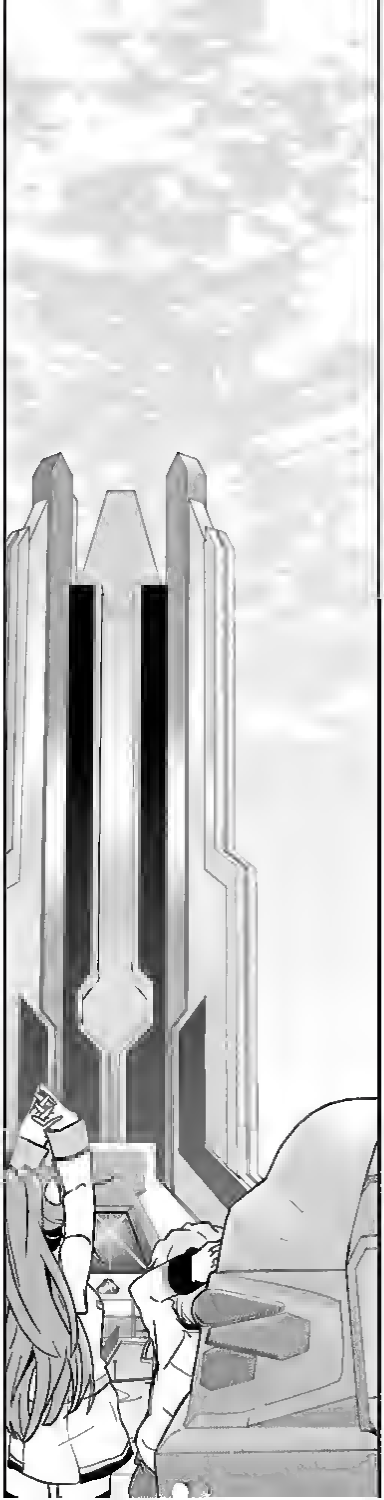
- 林 直孝(MAGES.)様
- OKiura様
- Project PMの皆様
- 動画工房様

- 電撃G'sマガジン編集部
- 電撃G'sコミック編集部
- 担当K白様

- 睦宮 瀧 様(アシスト)
- 夕霞 様(アシスト)
- waka 様(アシスト)

- 本作品の出版に
  尽力してくださった全ての方々
- この本を手に取ってくださっている
  読者の皆様

ありがとうございました。



プラスティック・メモリーズ 1

PLASTIC MEMORIES 1

Say to good-bye

■

THANK YOU FOR READING
"PLASTIC MEMORIES SAY TO GOOD-BYE".

THIS IS A STORY FOCUSING ON MICHIRU AND ZACK,
WHO ALSO APPEAR IN "PLASTIC MEMORIES",
THE ANIME AND ORIGINAL WORK FOR THIS SERIES

■

THESE TWO APPEAR AS VETERANS IN THE ANIME,
HOWEVER, I WANTED TO WRITE A STORY THAT ASKED.
WHAT HAPPENED TO THESE TWO WHEN
THEY WERE ROOKIES, TO MAKE THEM TREAT
TSUKASA THE WAY THEY DID, WHEN HE JOINED
AS A ROOKIE HIMSELF?

I THINK THAT, AFTER READING THIS MANGA,
PEOPLE WHO WATCH THE ANIME AGAIN WILL FEEL
THE NEW DEPTH ADDED TO THE WORLD THAT
TSUKASA AND THE REST OF THE CAST LIVE IN.

IF I CAN, I'D LIKE TO USE THESE TWO TO EXPRESS
IDEAS THAT COULDN'T BE EXPRESSED
WITH TSUKASA AND ISLA

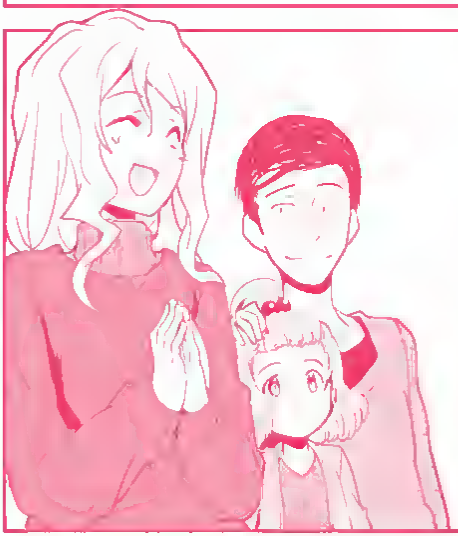
※SPOILER WARNING PLEASE READ THESE AFTER READING THE BOOK

INUGAYA SHIZURU - IAN

MICHIRU'S FIRST RETRIEVAL TARGETS, HOWEVER, NOT A CASE THAT WENT SMOOTHLY BY ANY MEANS SHIZURU'S LONG, BLACK HAIR PROJECTS AN IMAGE OF A PASSIONATE WOMAN

BECAUSE THERE WERE PRIOR CIRCUMSTANCES THAT THE DUO DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT, GETTING THROUGH TO THEM WASN'T EASY, AND THEY BOTH HAD A HARD TIME

BUT, IT CERTAINLY LEFT A STRONG IMPRESSION AS A FIRST CASE, DIDN'T IT?



HAMASUGE AKAYA - AOI - SUMIRE

RETRIEVAL DUTY IS A JOB THAT BECOMES SERIOUS VERY EASILY, BUT EVEN SO, I THINK THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO WOULD ACCEPT THE RETRIEVAL AND SPEND THEIR REMAINING TIME CHEERFULLY.

WHEN I TRIED TO THINK OF AN EXAMPLE OF A PERSON WHO WOULD ALWAYS BRIGHTEN UP THE ATMOSPHERE, THIS OLD MAN CAME TO MIND. AND, AS HIS PARTNER, I PICTURED AOI AS SOMEONE TO BALANCE OUT THE RELATIONSHIP

AS THE WORK INVOLVES A LOT OF PARTINGS NO MATTER WHAT, I'M HAPPY THAT I WAS ALSO ABLE TO DRAW A START OF A NEW RELATIONSHIP.

I THINK AKAYA-SAN'S QUIRKS WORKED WELL TO MAKE HIS LIFE WITH SUMIRE FEEL MORE LIKE A FAMILY.

MICHIRU, YOU DID YOUR BEST

■

STARTING FROM VOL 2, THE PLAN IS TO HAVE THE STORY TAKE PLACE IN THE SAME TIME PERIOD AS THE ANIME. I THINK SOME SCENES WILL INTERSECT WITH THE ANIME, FROM TIME TO TIME.

OF COURSE, MY GOAL IS TO ALSO MAKE THIS INTERESTING AS A STANDALONE WORK, BUT I WILL WORK HARD TO PUT SMILES ON THE FACES OF THOSE CURRENTLY WATCHING THE ANIME, AND THOSE STILL PLANNING TO WATCH IT.

I WOULD BE VERY HAPPY IF YOU WATCHED OVER ZACK AND MICHIRU'S STORY TO THE VERY END

THAT IS ALL. THIS HAS BEEN AN AFTERWORD-LIKE BONUS FOR THE LAST FEW PAGES OF THE VOLUME.

shotto

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